

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 FEAE-00

FRB-03 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01

AGR-05 SR-02 ORM-01 FBO-02 SCS-03 SCCT-01 AID-05

CCO-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 SP-02 OC-05 OPR-02

PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 MED-02 HEW-02 DEAE-00

CU-02 FAA-00 DOTE-00 /118 W
----- 016261

O 151405Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3885

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4829

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LE, PLO

SUBJECT: BEIRUT SITREP - 1200 Z

REF: A) BEIRUT 4749; B) BEIRUT 4794

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SUMMARY: CONDITIONS ON GROUND IN BEIRUT REMAINS

UNSETTLED WITH INTERMITTANT FIRING AND EXPLOSIONS OCCURRING IN VARIOUS PARTS OF CITY AS POLITICAL EFFORTS TO DEFUSE EXPLOSIVE SITUATION THUS FAR HAVE FAILED TO PRODUCE TANGIBLE RESULTS. AMCITS CONTINUE TO BE SAFE ALTHOUGH CAR BELONGING TO EMBASSY EMPLOYEE BOMBED LAST NIGHT AND FOREIGNERS, AS WELL AS LEBANESE, UNABLE MOVE FREELY IN CITY. TOURISTS SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED FROM VISITING LEBANON AT THIS TIME. PALESTINIANS, MAIN ELEMENTS OF WHICH HAVE NOT YET THROWN FULL WEIGHT INTO BALANCE, AND LEFTIST PARTIES CONTINUE CALL FOR PUNISHMENT OF PHALANGE. STRIFE OVER LAST 24 HOURS HAS SPREAD TO OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY AND SHOWN FIRST SIGNS OF ASSUMING CONFESSORIAL COLORATION. END SUMMARY.

1. COUNTRY PASSED NIGHT DESCRIBED BY BEIRUT POLICE OFFICIAL AS QTE BAD UNQTE AND AWOKE TO CONTINUED EXPLOSIONS AND CLASHES IN VARIOUS LOCALITIES. AS CASUALTY/REPORTS CONTINUE TO RISE (WE WOULD PLACE NUMBER KILLED TO DATE AS 80 TO 90) AND HEALTH MINISTRY ISSUED APPEALS FOR BLOOD DONORS AND FOR DOCTORS AND NURSES TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THEIR HOSPITALS, MAJOR PORTION OF POPULATION IN CAPITAL AT LEAST REMAINS HUNKERED DOWN IN THEIR HOMES.

2. DEKWANEH, TEL ZAATAR AND AIN RAMANNEH REMAINED PRIMARY BEIRUT CENTERS OF INCIDENTS (SNIPING, BOMBINGS AND SHELLING) DURING EVENING AND MORNING BUT SINN AL FIL REPORTEDLY SUSTAINED CONSIDERABLE MATERIAL DAMAGE AND RESIDENTS ARE APPARENTLY HOLED UP. PALESTINIANS ARE SAID TO HAVE OCCUPIED QUARANTINA HOSPITAL DURING AFTERNOON APRIL 14 AND WERE REPORTEDLY ROCKETING PHALANGIST TARGETS IN ASHRAFIYE. THUS FAR SINCE DAWN, THREE LARGE EXPLOSIONS (POSSIBLY ROCKETS) HAVE OCCURRED IN QUARANTINE DISTRICT NEAR PORT, THE FIRST KILLING ONE CIVILIAN AND INJURING THREE. UPI FURTHER REPORTS EIGHT DEAD AND 30 WOUNDED THIS MORN IN DEKWANEH AND FURN AS SHUBAK. AT ABOUT NOON APRIL 15, ARMY TECHNICIAN REMOVED 4 KILO PACKAGE OF PLASTIQUE WITH TIMER FROM NAPOLEAN HOTEL (BLOCK OFF HAMRA).
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3. AT LATEST REPORT SECURITY FORCES (POLICE AND GENDARMERIE WITH ARMORED VEHICLES) HAVE MOVED IN STRENGTH IN TROUBLED AREAS BUT THEIR MISSION IS NOT RPT NOT YET CLEAR. ONE REASONABLY RELIABLE REPORT STATED THAT SQUAD 16 MOVED AGAINST PHALANGE OFFICES IN RUE GEORGE PICOT EARLY THIS MORN, BUT FURTHER DETAILS NOT AVAILABLE. PM SOLH HAS AGAIN REPEATED IN-

TENTION TO APPLY THE LAW AND PUNISH THE CULPABLE BUT REJECTED PROCLAMATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY AND SAID PSP LEADER KAMAL JUMBLATT, WHO GRACEFULLY CONTINUES TO PLAY KEY ROLE AMONG BOTH GOL LEADERSHIP AND THOSE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF GOL, OPPOSED CALLING OUT ARMY. MININFO QUOTED THIS MORNING BY NEWS AGENCIES, HOWEVER, AS SAYING WOULD BE ORDERED IN IF SITUATION REQUIRES. AS OF EARLY AFTERNOON, MILITARY SOURCES INFORM US THEY PREPARING FOR POSSIBILITY ARMY MIGHT BE CALLED OUT AT APPROX. 1900Z TONIGHT.

4. ALL AMCITS REMAIN SAFE AT MOMENT. CLASHES, HOWEVER, BEGINNING TO AFFECT FOREIGN COMMUNITY. VEHICLE BELONGING TO MEMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF (DEA) WAS DESTROYED AT APPROX. 0200Z WHILE PARKED NEAR HIS RESIDENCE IN RAOUCHE. EXPLOSIVE WAS APPARENTLY SINGLE STICK OF DYNAMITE TOSSED UNDER CAR WHICH BORE WHITE DIPLOMATIC PLATES. IT STILL FAR FROM CONCLUSIVE THIS WAS PRE-MEDITATED ANTI-AMERICAN ACT, BUT WE HAVE WARNED EMPLOYEES WITH CD PLATES TO PARK CARS OFF STREET IF POSSIBLE AND AWAY FROM RESIDENCES IF NOT. ORDINARY BLACK PLATES BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES WHO WISH THEM. FRENCH AMB. WAS AWAKENED LAST EVENING WHEN STRAY BULLET ENTERED HIS BEDROOM; ITALIAN AMB. HAS MOVED INTO TOWN FROM RESIDENCE IN AFFECTED AREA OF CITY. ACS CLOSED TODAY; AUB OPEN AND QUIET BUT ATTENDANCE WELL BELOW NORMAL.

5. AIRPORT STILL OPERATING AND ACCESS ROAD OPEN. EMBOFF WHO RETURNED FROM AIRPORT THIS MORN REPORTS SIGHTING SEVERAL ARMED AND UNIFORMED FEDAYEEN IN AIRPORT CIRCLE BUT THEY MADE NO RPT NO EFFORT DISRUPT TRAFFIC. PAN AMERICAN, HOWEVER, REPORTS THAT IT WILL CONFIDENTIAL

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RUN OUT OF JET FUEL AS OF 1100Z TODAY WHICH WILL PROBABLY RESULT IN CANCELLATION OR DIVERSION OF SOME FLIGHTS. REFINEREY IN SIDON HAS PLENTY OF JET FUEL AND OTHER PRODUCTS BUT TANK TRUCKS UNABLE PASS SIDON. REFINERY IN TRIPOLI ALSO CONTINUES OPERATE BUT REPORTS HIGH ABSENTEEISM AND EVIDENCE UNKNOWN ELEMENTS PREVENTING WORKERS FROM REACHING PLANT, POSSIBLY TO EMBARRASS PHALANGIST MINPET. WITH REFINED PRODUCTS FILLING STORAGE CAPACITY, IT POSSIBLE

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 FEAE-00

FRB-03 AGR-05 SR-02 ORM-01 FBO-02 SCS-03 SCCT-01

AID-05 CCO-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 SP-02

OC-05 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01

SS-15 SY-05 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

MED-02 HEW-02 DEAE-00 CU-02 FAA-00 DOTE-00 COME-00

EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /118 W

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O 151405Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3886

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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BOTH REFINERIES WILL HAVE CLOSED DOWN SOON UNLESS

DELIVERIES TO CONSUMERS BECOME POSSIBLE.

INDUSTRY SOURCES ESTIMATE LOCAL GAS STATIONS WILL

BEGIN TO RUN OUT OF GASOLINE BY WEDNESDAY OR THURS-

DAY IF RESUPPLY NOT POSSIBLE.

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6. IN VIEW OF UNSETTLED CONDITIONS IN LEBANON, EM-BASSY HAS INFORMED DEPT. BY SEPTTEL THAT TOURISTS SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED FROM COMING AT THIS TIME. EM-BASSY CONTINUING COUNSEL EMPLOYEES AND AMCITS WHO INQUIRE TO KEEP MOVEMENTS AROUND BEIRUT TO ABSOLUTE MINIMUM. MOST DIPLOMATIC AND OTHER SOCIAL FUNCTIONS ARE BEING CANCELLED.

7. ON POLITICAL SCENEN THERE CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY BUT NO CONCRETE RESULTS YET APPARENT. ARAB LEAGUE SYG RIAD ARRIVED BEIRUT LAST EVENING AND BEGAN SERIES OF CONCILATION MEETINGS, INCLUDING SESSION WITH ARAB AMBS. IN BEIRUT AND ABU IYAD (FATAH) AND NAYIF HAWATMEH (PDFLP). 'ARAFAT WAS NOT PRESENT ADN, TO BEST WE CAN DETERMINE, HAS REMAINED ALOOF FROM CONSULTATIONS. LATEST REPORTS PLACE HIM IN DAMASCUS TODAY AFTER HAVING SPENT PART OF YESTERDAY IN SOUTH LEBANON. ACCORDING RELIABLE LEBANESE JOURNALIST, RIAD HAS MET WITH SOLH AND FRANJIE AND SAW JUMBLATT AT ST. GEORGE HOTEL THIS MORN. MEETING BETWEEN RIAD AND GEMAYEL NOT RPT NOT YET SCHEDULED, BUT RIAD EXPECTED TO MAKE APPEARANCE AT MUSLIM/PROGRESSIVE" PALESTINIAN RALLY SET FOR 1500Z AT MAKASSED ASSOCIATION IN BEIRUT. ROLE OF ARAB AMBS. IN BEIRUT IN EFFORTS TO COMPOSE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FACTIONS UNCLEAR, BUT THERE REPORTS THAT THEY ALSO EXTREMELY ACTIVE, AS ARE SOME LEBANESE POLITICAL FIGURES.

8. PM SOLH HELD SERIES OF SESSIONS DURING YESTERDAY AFTERNOON INCLUDING ONE WITH CABINET WHICH IS RELIABLY REPORTED TO HAVE DEGENERATED INTO SHOUTING MATCH. TWO MINISTERS AFFILIATED WITH KAMAL JUMBLATT'S PSP, ABBAS KHALAF AND KHALED JUMBLATT, HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR RESIGNATIONS BUT MADE THEM CONTINGENT UPON SOLH'S MEETING THEIR DEMANDS THAT GUILTY (READ PHALANGE) IN SUNDAY'S SHOOT 'EM UP BE BROUGHT TO QTE JUSTICE UNQTE AND GOVT. RESTORE ORDER. SOLH HAS CONTINUED TO TALK ABOUT FOURTEEN PERSONS ARRESTED YESTERDAY (PARA 3, BEIRUT 4794) BUT THIS HAS BROUGHT HIM LITTLE SURCEASE SINCE NO ONE, ESPECIALLY JUMBLATT, REALLY BELIEVES THEY ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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PABLE. AS WE NOTED IN BEIRUT 4749, LOSS OF JUMBLATT'S SUPPORT AND MINISTERS WOULD KNOCK REMAINING PROP FROM UNDER SOLH GOVT., WHICH ALREADY STAGGERING.

9. FEDAYEEN SPOKESMEN FOR MAJOR GROUPS, ESPECIALLY FATAH, ARE CLAIMING THEIR FORCES SHOWING REAL RE-

STRAINT IN FACE OF PHALANGE QTE PROVOCATIONS UNQTE. WE UNABLE CONFIRM THIS CLAIM, BUT IT QUITE POSSIBLY TRUE, SINCE HEAD COUNT TO DATE APPEARS BE IN FAVOR OF PHALANGE. SPLINTER GROUPS AMONG FEDAYEEN AND PROBABLY UNDISCIPLINED ELEMENTS OF MORE QTE MODERATE UNQTE ORGANIZATIONS, HOWEVER, DO NOT APPEAR TO BE EXERCISING RESTRAINT AND IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER MAJOR PALESTINIAN GROUPS CAN AVOID MORE AGGRESSIVE STANCE INDEFINITELY IF BASIC SITUATION IS NOT CONTAINED SOON. SHOULD PLO/FATAH TAKE DECISION TO GO ALL-OUT, RESIDENTS OF BEIRUT AND OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY WILL PROBABLY HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO BATTEN HATCHES AND TRY HOLD ON. AS WE HAVE REPORTED OVER LAST SEVERAL YEARS, WE BELIEVE FEDAYEEN ARE WELL SITUATED, PARTICULARLY IN CAPITAL, FOR SUSTAINED URBAN WARFARE AND TERRORISM WHICH WOULD TAKE MAXIMUM TOLL IN LIVES AND PROPERTY.

10. IN ADDITION TO PROLONGATION OF CURRENT CRISIS WITH OUTLINES OF DENOUEMENT STILL NOT RPT NOT IN SIGHT, DISTURBING ELEMENT IS APPARENT SPREAD OF CLASHES GEOGRAPHICALLY AND INDICATIONS THAT STRIFE MAY BE TAKING TURN TOWARD CHRISTIAN VS. MUSLIM/PALESTINIAN CONFLICT. TRIPOLI WITNESSED TWO MAJOR DEMONSTRATIONS APRIL 14 IN WHICH AT LEAST TWO KILLED AND SEVEN WOUNDED AND THREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES WERE BOMBED LAST EVENING. YESTERDAY'S EVENTS ALSO INCLUDED GRATUITOUS SACK OF CHAMOUN'S NLP HEADQUARTERS IN TRIPOLI. ALTHOUGH CHAMOUN'S FORCES STILL HVE NOT ENTERED FRAY SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, NLP OFFICES NEAR FONMINISTRY IN BEIRUT WERE OBJECT THIS MONRNING OF ATTEMPTED ROCKETING. CHAMOUNIST MILITIA REPORTEDLY KILLED
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UNKNOWN PERSONS SEEKING TO EMLACE ROCKET LAUNCHER ATOP NEARBY ROOFTOP.

11. PHALANGIST OFFICES IN ZAHLE AND NEARBY VIL- LAGE OF SADNAIL WERE BOMBED LAST EVENING AND PHALANGE OFFICE IN SIDON ATTACKED AND LATER ROCKETED FROM REFUGEE CAMPS OUTSIDE SIDON. THREE CHRISTIAN (NOT PHALANGIST) VILLAGES IN MIEH MIEH REGION IN VICINITY OF SIDON WERE ROCKETED FROM CAMPS. ACCORDING ONE USUALLY RELIABLE LEBANESE SOURCE, WHEN VILLAGERS DID NOT RETURN FIRE, PAL- ESTINIANS ADVANCED INTO THEM AND, AT ONE, SEIZED FATHER AND BROTHER OF LEBANESE SECURITY OFFICIAL AND SHOT THEM. JUST AS CONTINUING PALESTINIAN OR

MUSLIM CASUALTIES MUST EVENTUALLY INFLAME SENTIMENT
OF EVEN MORE MODERATE COMPATRIOTS, SO CHRISTIAN
LOSSES WILL TEND TO ENGAGE EMOTIONS OF CHRISTIANS
WHO HAVE THUS FAR NOT SUPPORTED PHALANGE.
GODLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PALESTINIANS, PROGRESS REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT04829
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750131-0413
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750455/aaaabyop.tel
Line Count: 336
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BEIRUT 4749, 75 BEIRUT 4794
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 MAY 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BEIRUT SITREP - 1200 Z
TAGS: PINS, LE, PLO
To: STATE DIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006